AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS LETTER

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AGITATE! EDUCATE! ORGANIZE!

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The A. F. of L. Weekly News Letter contains a brief summary of important matters affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and such other information that will benefit the trade union movement.

INJUNCTION JUDGES IGNORE PEOPLE'S WILL

Seattle, Oct. 20.—Trade unionists in this state are aroused over a disregard of the people's will by injunction judges.

Two years ago the legislature passed an anti-injunction law, but our organized labor secured a referendum on the measure, which was beaten most decisively.

Last July the state supreme court ignored the people's expressed will and in the so-called St. Germain case not only ruled against picketing but held that a minority of employees may be used for damage.

Unionists are now discussing a recent ruling by Judge Boyd J. Tallman of the superior court of King county in an injunction case instituted by the Stimson Mill company against its striking shingle weavers. The company asked for an injunction against picketing and for $50,000 damages. The workers proved so conclusively that they had not picketed the mill that the court was compelled to dismiss the case.

Instead of censuring the company for its false statements, Judge Tallman proceeded to lecture the workers and air his views on picketing in general.

"If just one man was to walk back and forth in front of a place without saying a word," said the court, "it would be compelled to come to a halting and punish it as such."

With the St. Germain decision in mind trade unionists say that if Judge Tallman's decision stands it means that a Hanbury law is not far from possible. This prospect is being used by the workers in a vigorous campaign against injunction judges of this state.

UNIONISM MAKING HISTORY.

San Francisco, Oct. 20.—"Organized labor in the United States is progressing ahead more rapidly at present than at any other time in its history," writes Editor Paul Scharrenberg in Labor Clarion.

"In truth it is making more progress in a single week now than it formerly made in years, and this quick action is sure to bring to the front new problems for solution, questions which will require the active application of the best brains we can command, and the exercise of forethought and sound judgment on the part of the rank and file. The structure we are building is a structure accordingly is a wise union, and the one that is ignoring the responsibilities of the future will be sorry for it. Employers who are compelled to yield today to the demands of a practice will be just as greedy as ever and just as anxious to re-establish old conditions when the opportunity presents itself in the future. Prepare for that time. Be not overconfident, since such men that a backward step means a stubborn and costly struggle for them."

COAL OUTPUT INCREASED.

Washington, Oct. 20.—Soft coal is being produced at a rate never before equaled, says Director George Otis Smith of the United States geological survey, in a report that is of interest at this time, in view of statements regarding coal shortage. His calls attention, however, to the tremendous drain on the railroad hauling and transportation activity.

In the second week in April, 1917, the average daily production was more than 1,900,000 tons, the highest point yet reached in the country. August the lowest rate for the summer, 1,638,000 tons, was recorded; and in the last week of September the average daily rate was 1,823,000 tons. In the first eight months of 1917 the production of soft coal was 362,500,000 tons, or 27,000,000 tons more than in the first eight months of 1916, the largest increase in any period shipments of anthracite increased 16 per cent. over those of 1916.

FIRST-AID CONTRACT HARMS.

Seattle, Oct. 20.—"Abuses are already cropping up under the contract doctor system recently forced by the first-aid law," says the Seattle Union Record, "and workers should closely study and consider its provisions before being led into some action from which there may be no way out. There are strenuous efforts being made to get all the workers under some sort of contract, and it is now up to the rank and fear or five workers employed by a contractor today may sign such a contract for a term of three years that will be binding upon all the workers that contractor may hire during the three years, and may involve thousands who have no part in arriving at its terms."

NO EXCUSE FOR HIGH PEAS.

Washington, Oct. 20.—With the enormous total of nearly 240,000,000 cans of peas ready for sale, the federal food administration announces that "there is no excuse for the extortionate prices being asked in some markets." It also was disclosed that canners who are taking advantage of scrap conditions in the canned goods trade in an unwarranted manner are being investigated.

Fears that this year's crop of peas would be below the average of the last five years proved groundless, and returns to the food administration show that it is nearly 50 per cent larger than that of 1916.

GOOD T. U. JOURNALISM.

Wilmington, Del., Oct. 20.—Editor Saylor of the Labor Herald did a fine piece of trade union journalism in reporting the address of the president of the local Manufacturers' association at its annual meeting.

Saylor divided the address into short paragraphs, in parallel columns replied to each hypocritical sentence and trade union indictment of this federation that when ever organization for every one occupied workers.

COPPER PAPERS SQUIRM.

Phoenix, Ariz., Oct. 20.—At the recent convention of the California state federation of labor, President Donnelly of the Arizona state federation of labor, said that the copper companies owned a majority of the papers in this state and that they control the twelfth. The best defense of these papers is to attack labor to assist that they are the twelfth.

WILL ENFORCE LABOR LAW.

Boise, Idaho, Oct. 20.—E. F. Carpenter, president of the state federation of labor, has been appointed one of the commissioners to enforce the workmen's compensation act, passed the last legislature.

PACKING EMPLOYES UNITE.

Sioux City, Iowa, Oct. 20.—The packing House union has broken one sealed labor record in this city, and the last two meetings its membership has increase 40%.

CO-OPERATORS CHECK ANARCHY IN RUSSIA

New York, Oct. 20.—In a statement issued by the Russian information bureau, issues a ray of daylight on Russian conditions is given:

"Among the forces which have saved Russia from the dangers of anarchy at this critical moment, first place belongs to the co-operative organizations. The representatives of which took a definite stand at the very start of the economic conference, for a coalition cabinet, for a strong government, for cessation of strikes and for coming down to intensive work in organizing all the constructive forces of the country. The co-operative movement which has played the role of a decisive factor in the latest crisis will be felt as the most powerful constructive force in all the further developments of the Russian revolution. This is the only social movement which reaches almost every Russian village and represents the real spirit of the country. Not long ago the Russian co-operative movement celebrated its 25 years anniversary, and it was calculated that at that moment there were over 25,000 co-operative societies and unions with a membership of almost 12,000,000.

"Co-operation is most prevalent among the peasants and every member of a co-operative organization represents a whole family.

"We cannot but accept the estimate offered by the present minister of supplies, Mr. Prokopovitch, who is a recognized authority on the Russian co-operative movement, that the total actual membership of the Russian co-operative organizations approaches 60,000,000. Of course, the urban workers are numerically much smaller than the rural population, but they are organized, spoken of as an 'armed people.'

"And yet," continues the writer, "we see women running elevators, soldering in factories, acting as messengers and used in other places where they can be hired cheaper than men and used for sebastional advertising.

"I know of one factory that discharged all the men and put women in their places, giving them from $1 to $4 a week less than they had to men, and then crying, 'The war has taken our men.'

"A big department store that never had any other kind of workers on its establishment but colored men now has young women. Surely all the young colored men have not been drafted, and even if they were there are hundreds of elderly men who would be glad to get this kind of work.

"This cry of women taking the places of men is to a great extent quite a cheap, unscrupulous way of advertising and getting an underpaid class under the cry of 'necessity.' It is attracting unthinking thousands of women to the city, where there is no employment, overcrowding the town, and keeps the ignorant, unthinking person excited over the thought that all our manhood is drafted or about to be."

INDUSTRIAL UNIONISM.

Chicago, Oct. 20. — "Industrial unionism will come—must come—in the natural course of events," declares Editor Sweeney of the Tailor, official organ of the Journeymen Tailors' union.

"No man or number of men can force industrial unions on workers until the workers are ready for it," he continues. "The workers are not ready for industrial unionism at the present time. When evolution does its work, we will have an industrial system 'of organization—not till then.

"The plan adopted by the American Federation of Labor seems to be a slow one—too slow for the dissatisfied souls who would usher in the socialistic commonwealth over night, but to men of more mature knowledge the plan is the safest and best that could be adopted at this time."

TAILORS MAKE PROGRESS.

Washington, Oct. 20.—A short time ago there were five organized journeymen tailors in the nation's capital. Assisted by Organizer Biggs these workers began a course of membership 150 and secured contracts and wage increases of 25 per cent from nine first-class firms. A short strike assisted this movement.

Denver, Oct. 20.—Organized tailors have raised wages 25 per cent and secured recognition agreements after 250 employes are benefited. They succeeded in the face of the passage of the Colorado "can't-strike" statute, which makes it unlawful to strike until after 30 days' notice has been filed with the state industrial commission.

UNIONS WILL EDUCATE.

Boulder, Col., Oct. 20.—The state federation of labor will give 20 scholarships and daughters of labor a college education is being given enthusiastic support by officials of the Colorado state university, and at a meeting in the city, attended by unionists and educators it was decided to incorporate the Colorado Labor Education Association. Organizers will be asked to finance a 1918 class of at least 100 young men and women. The recipients will be expected to give back at some future time the money loaned them by Colorado's organized workers. The plan has been indorsed by the four railroad brotherhoods.

A GLOOMY PROSPECT.

Seattle, Oct. 20.—The trade union movement is in serious danger, according to this statement in a letter to the trade unions of this city.

"There are some things about the unions which are good and many other things which should not be tolerated in a civilized community for an instant. The idea of an ignorant employer telling his employes how long they should run their business is getting to be a byword in this city, and will not be tolerated much longer."

BARBERS WANT MORE.

Fort Wayne, Ind., Oct. 20.—Eight years ago the Barbers' union adopted its present scale and it is time to raise to per cent over $18. These workers have circulated its for a change, and are now asking $16 and 60 per cent over $22.

CANNERS EXPLOIT.

Olympia, Wash., Oct. 20.—Commissioner of Labor Younger will ask the state legislature to check the exploitation of workers by Alaska canners. Poor food, worthless checks and a blacklist is predicted in the near future.

OIL CO. FIGHTS UNIONISM.

Alton, Ill., Oct. 20.—Gun men furnished by the Burns detective agency are being used to break a strike at the Roxana Oil Refining company. A number of trades are involved.

Grit, Not Emotion, Sways England, Whose Armies Are Most Active

Washington, Oct. 20.—The "sterling manhood' stuff don't go in England these days. If an army of 10,000 would march through the streets of London, cheering for the house of lords. The term 'my lord,' in many cases, has been replaced by more familiar terms. The demoralizing influence of Lloyd George has been a tremendous factor in this change. Another factor is the political unrest, realizes they must possess some knowledge of political economy, and they are cultivating the acquaintance of trade unionists rather than be lost in the changing orders of today.

"There are two large labor organizations in England—the British trades union congress, with a membership of 2,000,000, and the general federation of trades unions, with a membership of 1,000,000. The latter was organized primarily, as I understand, to collect funds to finance strikes, although it has naturally enlarged this function. The congress, which Golden and I attended as A. F. of L. fraternal delegates, treats with all phases of the labor question and is looked upon as the legislative body. Both organizations are regular. This situation constitutes a condition such as one who has not lived in the British Isles.

"Organized workers over there have made some wonderful gains since the war began and now it is the ambition of every workingman's wife and every workingman's wife and every workingman's wife and